



FORMATION PROGRAM IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION



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Let everyone be quick to listen.
James 1:19

Do you...

- ▶ have a desire to walk alongside others as they seek a deepening of their spiritual walk?
- ▶ find other people ask you to discern with them God's will for their lives?
- ▶ find joy in watching God work in the life of another person?
- ▶ have a disciplined prayer life?
- ▶ appreciate the value of solitude and silence?
- ▶ have a contemplative approach to life?
- ▶ acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- ▶ have a spiritual director?
- ▶ willingly accept the responsibility to be accountable to others for the ministry of spiritual direction?

Listen to me in silence.
Isaiah 41:1

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

Anyone who wants to become more in tune with God's presence, and to be able to respond more fully to God's presence in every aspect of life, may choose to seek spiritual direction. In spiritual direction one individual, the directee, commits to meet on a regular basis with another individual, the director.

In this holy listening to another and staying in the Presence of God, one can hear the Creator asking us to listen. "Listen to me, all of you and understand." [Mark 7:14]

Well known author, Richard Foster states, "What is the purpose of spiritual direction? The 17th century Benedictine mystic, Dom Augustine Baker, writes, 'In a word, he is only God's usher, and must lead souls in God's way, and not his own.' His(her) direction is simply and clearly to lead us to our real Director."

Margaret Guenther writes in her book, *Holy Listening*, "Spiritual direction, as a work of love, is also a work of freedom. The director is willing to let be, to love with an open hand. Hers is a contemplative love, immune from temptation to devour, possess, or manipulate. Always seeing the other as a child of God, she is filled with respect, even awe in the presence of the person sitting across the sacred space."

This program will provide training and practical experience for persons interested in serving as spiritual directors.

Spiritual directors who have completed this program will be accountable to their parish priest, pastor or designee in the exercise of this ministry.

MINISTRY DISCERNMENT

There are a number of steps you can take to explore the call to spiritual direction:

First and foremost, spend time in prayer and the study of Holy Scriptures seeking God's will.

Share this sense of call with your priest or pastor and a small group of trusted believers. Do they also sense this call on your life?

Be of mature age and life experience that reflects an on-going relationship and caring for God.

Have an established regular relationship with a spiritual director of your choice prior to the program.

Have maintained a daily discipline of prayer and devotional practices including journaling and contemplative prayer.

"The ancient art of spiritual direction is a way of affirming the simple truth of God's wild generosity. The spiritual director or friend of the soul is someone who listens to us lovingly and accurately and, by the gift of caring attention, reveals to us God's open heart."

Alan Jones

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This ecumenical program is focused on ancient Christian streams or traditions of spirituality providing resources and support for spiritual guidance in today's world. We recognize and acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of spiritual guidance as a part of God's ministry in the world.

We believe that participants will be strengthened in their own personal relationship with God as they explore and move through the topics presented in a didactic, experiential, practical, integrative and interactive manner.

Individuals will also be encouraged to share, reflect and provide ongoing evaluation to the staff.



PROGRAM OUTLINE

YEAR ONE

Areas of study:

- Personal Spirituality
- Elements of Spiritual Companionship
- Ministry of Spiritual Direction
- History of Spirituality Through the Ages
- Spiritual Direction in the Benedictine, Franciscan, Ignation and Augustinian Traditions
- Sexual Misconduct Prevention
- Prayer and Spirituality—the art of contemplation

YEAR TWO

Practical experience of spiritual direction including supervision, peer mentoring, review of case studies, reflection and feedback.

Be a spiritual guide/director to two individuals for case study presentations and review

Seminars on issues such as
forgiveness
discernment
prayer and inner healing
transference

"I am fully persuaded if you had always one or two faithful friends near you who would speak the very truth from their heart and watch over you in love, you would swiftly advance...."

John Wesley



"A spiritual director is...

- a person possessed by the Spirit,
- a person characterized by holiness of life and closeness to God,
- a person of experience—in prayer and life,
- a person of learning—particularly in the scriptures and the patristic writings,
- a person of discernment who can read the signs of the times and the writing on the wall of the soul,
- a person who gives way to the Holy Spirit."

Kenneth Leech